

HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2006

Mayor Pro Tem and Council met for a regular meeting at the Community Center at 7:30 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Pro-Tem, Temple Ogundu; Councils Rose Adams, Wayne Bullard and Terry Benjamin; Police Chief, Terry Davis; PWD, Donnie Warren; Fire Chief, Dwight Bennett; City Attorney, Rob Plumb; Recorder, Marilyn Brady

Mayor Pro Tem Ogundu called the meeting to order.

Police Chief, Terry Davis, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed with the invocation given by Council Bullard.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, welcomed the citizens and stated his appreciation for their participation in city government.

REVIEW/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

July 3, 2006 Work Session
July 6, 2006 Council Meeting
July 13, 2006 Special Called Meeting
July 27, 2006 Special Called Meeting
July 31, 2006 Work Session

Council Adams asked for a correction of July 27, 2006 minutes where it stated that Rob Plumb, City Attorney, asked for a motion. She said that she believed that Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, called for the motion. **Council Benjamin made a motion to approve July 3, 6, 13, 27, and 31, with the amended correction, seconded by Council Bullard. Vote was unanimous.**

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked if Council had anything to add to this agenda. **Council Adams made a motion to add the fall Clerk's Training on September 24-27, for Diane Bellflower and Belinda Clanton, seconded by Council Benjamin. Vote was unanimous.**

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked Council to add the resolution from RDC which authorizes the start of the study period. **Council Adams made a motion to add the adoption of the resolution to the agenda, seconded by Council Bullard. Vote was unanimous.**

PUBLIC HEARING

(B) HA-2006-04 Request for a variance to the minimum number of parking spaces required for a personal service shop, zoned C-H (Highway Commercial) 0.17 acres – Tricon Development, Inc, 110 South Church Street, Hahira, GA

Ms. Anne Marie Wolfe of the Planning Commission stated that this was a request from Tricon Development. The property is zoned Highway Commercial and is currently undeveloped and applicant is planning to build a gym. They are requesting a variance to a minimum number of parking spaces that is required. They are required to have 25 parking spaces. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked if Council had any questions? Council Benjamin stated that this was for 11 spaces.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked if there was anyone against the proposal? There were none.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked for anyone who was for the proposal to speak. Vickie O'Brien, 626 E. Main Street Ext., stated that her request was approved by the Planning Commission last week. They are short about 11 spaces. She asked for Council's approval of the variance.

Council Benjamin made a motion to approve the variance for the minimum number of parking spaces required, seconded by Council Adams. Discussion followed. Vote was unanimous.

- (A) HA-2006-03 Rezone 0.30 acres of a duplex (two family) dwelling units in a R-10 (Single Family Residential) zoning – John Bailey, 401 Judy Ann Drive, Hahira, GA 31632

Ms. Anne Marie Wolfe, of the Planning Commission, stated that applicant is requesting a special exception to establish a duplex, two family residential dwelling in a single family R-10 building district. The property is at 401 Judy Ann Drive and currently undeveloped. The general character of the area is residential. All homes in the area are single family homes. The staff found it inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended denial. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July meeting and they found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked for those in favor of the request to speak. Mr. John Bailey, 5561 Sumner Road, explained his plans for the property. He is planning to build a duplex on the property, which would not be for sale. This would be for his own use to rent out. His son would live in one side and his mother-in-law in the other.

Vicki O'Brien, 626 E. Main Street Ext., asked to speak on behalf of this project. She said that this is something Hahira needs. Good affordable housing and rental property is lacking in Hahira. This would be a very aesthetically pleasing project for the community.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked for those against the request to speak. Mr. Ralph Clendenin, 202 S. Hagan Bridge Rd., stated that he was not opposed to the request but he was opposed to being threatened by Mr. Bailey making the statement that he was going to build something there if he didn't get his way.

Ms. Sandy Sumner, Short Street, said that she believed we needed growth in Hahira with housing and affordable rental places.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, asked if there was anyone opposed to this request. Mr. Burke Holtzclaw, 405 Judy Ann Dr., stated that he had spoken to his neighbors and they are concerned it would depreciate their property value.

Mr. Charles Kent, 404 Judy Ann Dr., is the owner of the property adjacent to the property that Mr. Bailey purchased. He stated that he had two letters that he wanted to read. The first letter, dated August 9, 2006, was to whom it may concern, and signed by the original owners of the property. The other letter addressed to Council, dated Aug. 6, 2006, was from 18 neighbors voicing their disapproval. Mr. Kent asked Council to deny this request.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that he also lives on Judy Ann Drive. More than 18 citizens in that area have come to him asking for Council to vote against this request.

Council Benjamin asked if they could get a committee, or a few representatives, together from that area to meet with Mr. Bailey and work out some possible solution.

Mr. Bailey spoke again on his plans for the property, but did not want anyone to think that he was threatening them. He mentioned property values and the appraised values. He said citizens should not sell their property at the appraised value.

Council Adams made a motion to deny the request, seconded by Council Bullard. Discussion followed. Vote was unanimous.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mr. D. K. Hollis, 101 N. Hagan Bridge Rd., said that he had two questions. #1 - On all the agendas, "Citizens to be Heard", are generally the remarks or discussion about things that are going to be brought before Council and discussed by the Council. He requested that Council give thought to allow citizens to speak on items that are not routine. #2 - He wanted to ask the two Councilmen who did not second the resolution on the motion to enter into negotiations with the County for the water and sewer project to give their reasons why they did not want to do that. There was no discussion on it and the motion died for lack of a second. Because there is such a small Council, a lot of things are going to die that way. He said that he thought the citizens should be aware of what the Council was thinking about without bringing it up and seconded it. They could have voted it down. They didn't want any discussion on it, he guessed. He did not think that was right. Somebody better stop and think. That was nails in the coffin on this community. When the County goes in and puts in water and sewer on the west side and open it up to the north side, this town will not have anywhere to go to the north or the west. We will be locked in by the County. People need to stop and think 10 years down the road, 5 years, 12 years, 15 years down the road and say, where are we going to expand the city limits? He said he could assure them that it won't be west and unless you get water and sewer, you won't go north because those people are going to sue to be de-annexed from the city. He said that the two Council members need to explain to the citizens why they chose to do that. They don't have to, but he thought this community deserved a response and it should be put in the minutes to where the people in this community can read it and say why we don't want to go forward and keep Hahira. Some people say they want it to stay like it is, but he said it wasn't going to stay that way.

Vickie O'Brien, 626 E. Main St. Ext., stated that the Doubletree agreement deserved more attention than it got. An issue of this magnitude needs to have input from the citizens in the community.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that he had received a letter two days ago and also had a discussion with a lawyer concerning the Doubletree deal and he has passed the City Attorney's letter to all of the Council members. Maybe they can revisit this issue again. The Council is aware of it and are going to go over it. There will be a Work Session on Tuesday. If citizens are interested, this issue will be on the Agenda for the Work Session on Tuesday. They will not let this issue go. They still have a week or so to talk with the County.

Vickie O'Brien stated maybe we will get a second chance and if we do she feels that we should take it.

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that the Council would look into every concern that they have heard tonight. We are in this thing together and we want to see the city go forward. That is our goal and that should be our agenda.

APPROVAL OF CORPORATE RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE MAYOR PRO TEM AND A COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that the purpose of this was to allow the Mayor Pro Tem and a Council member to sign city checks. He recommended Mayor Pro Tem and another Council member be added to the list. Council Bullard stated that he did not think that all four Council members should be on the list. He said that they could remove his name and add Diane Bellflower to the list. After discussion, **Council Benjamin made a motion to approve the Corporate Resolution to include the Mayor Pro Tem, the Council member and also add Ms. Bellflower to the Corporate Resolution, seconded by Council Bullard. Vote was unanimous.**

APPROVAL OF COST OF LIVING AND MERIT INCREASE FOR CITY EMPLOYEES

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that it was his understanding that since 2004, the city employees have not received a cost of living increase or merit increase. He spoke to the city accountant and was told that the city has some money in 2006 in order to accommodate this. He asked for a motion. **Council Benjamin made a motion to approve the cost of living (3.27%) and merit increase, seconded by Council Adams. Vote was unanimous.**

APPROVE REQUEST FOR THE SAVANNAH HEART PINE TO REMOVE SOUTH END CHAIR RAIL AND BASE BOARD INCLUDING WALL PANELING, REPAIR SPOTS IN WALL, SEAL WALL, AND REINSTALL NEW PANELS, INSTALL CHAIR RAILS AND BASE BOARDS

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that this was for the courthouse and the cost would be \$500.00. **Council Benjamin made a motion to approve the request for Savannah Heart Pine, seconded by Council Adams. Councils Benjamin and Adams voted yes. Council Bullard abstained. Motion passed.**

APPROVE TRAVEL FOR CLERKS TRAINING FOR MS. DIANE BELLFLOWER AND BELINDA FROM SEPTEMBER 24 – 27

Council Bullard made a motion to approve the training, seconded by Council Benjamin. Discussion followed. Vote was unanimous.

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT COMMUNITY AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, read the resolution on the 25 year plan of the Greater Lowndes Comprehensive Plan Update. He called for a motion. **Council Benjamin made a motion to approve the resolution concerning the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Council Bullard. Discussion followed. Vote was unanimous.**

REPORTS

(A) COUNCIL

Council Benjamin stated that he was glad to be back. He thanked everyone for their support.

Council Adams welcomed Terry Benjamin back.

Council Bullard wanted to address Mr. Hollis' request. He said that he thought it was a good plan, but it appeared to be a quick fix. They were not going to come into the city anyway. They were only going to give us 200,000 gallons and he thought, with all of the growth that we are anticipating, we were going to need more than that.

(B) Mayor

Mayor Pro Tem, Ogundu, stated that the Council has worked diligently to get this proposal going, from the initial beginning.. Several Council members were against it until we got to the point where a letter of intent was denied. The intention of Council was, after the letter of intent was approved, a Town Hall Meeting was supposed to be scheduled in August where citizens will be informed and asked to come up. He discussed this with David Hollis. Unfortunately, there was no second to approve the letter so there was no reason to have a Town Hall Meeting but we still have an opportunity. This city needs sewer capacity. #2: We have a financial problem.

There being no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Temple Ogundu
Mayor Pro Tem

Marilyn Brady
Recorder